



## Virtual AmeriCorps Member Marketing and Recruitment: Helpful Links

### Information to Aid Your Marketing Efforts to Potential Applicants:

Website Link	Description of Resource
<a href="#">VISTA Campus</a>	Online learning resources to help you serve better, as well as opportunities to connect with your fellow VISTA members, leaders, and alumni.
<a href="#">Benefits of VISTA Service</a>	Section of the VISTA Campus outlining VISTA member benefits. All benefits may not apply to every VISTA member, but you will want applicant to explore their potential benefits to see if the VISTA program is of interest to them and if they can be successful as a VISTA member.
<a href="#">VISTA Resources and Contacts</a>	1-pager with links to information applicants may want to know prior to accepting the offer to serve, such as VISTA benefits and policy.
<a href="#">VISTA Member Orientation Checklist</a>	Use this checklist to let individuals know during the application and interview phase about their requirements to start service.
<a href="#">Living Allowance Calendar</a>	Review a sample living allowance statement, a schedule of pay periods and pay dates, and view FAQs. Share some of this information with potential applicants to help them determine in advance if they will be able to live on the living allowance.

*(More resources on next page)*

**Marketing and Recruitment:**

Website Link	Description of Resource
<a href="#">Recruitment Plan Worksheet</a>	Use this worksheet to create a plan for organizing your recruitment efforts.
<a href="#">VISTA Recruitment Checklist</a>	Sample tasks outlining the multi-step process of VISTA recruitment.
<a href="#">VISTA Recruitment Planning Calendar</a>	List of recruitment milestones and timelines based on your members' VISTA Member Orientation dates.
<a href="#">AmeriCorps VISTA Quick Guide for Recruitment</a>	Document that includes a variety of steps sponsors can take in recruitment depending on the time they have, from 30 minutes to an entire day.
<a href="#">Member Recruitment Hot Tips</a>	Document offering tips and ideas on how you can think about recruitment differently and expand the reach of your advertising and marketing.
<a href="#">New AmeriCorps Brand Resources and Branding Guidance</a>	Details on AmeriCorps brand guidelines, gear store, and marketing materials.
<a href="#">Creating a Recruitment Plan</a>	Worksheet designed to help you create a plan to organize your recruitment efforts and consider timelines and actions needed.
<a href="#">Recruitment Ideas</a>	List of different recruitment suggestions for your VISTA project to consider and adapt for your needs.
<a href="#">Considerations for Rural/Village Local VISTA Recruitment</a>	Thoughts about how to recruit the best applicants in rural areas and in local villages, shared from a VISTA project.
<a href="#">Getting the Word Out - Inclusive Recruitment Avenues</a>	Suggested ways to bolster your in-person and electronic recruitment efforts along with examples of two-line teasers to capture interest in your VISTA program.
<a href="#">Creating a Service Opportunity Listing in eGrants</a>	Step-by-Step guide to create an accurate and effective service opportunity listing in eGrants.
<a href="#">Sample Interview Questions</a>	Prepare for VISTA interviews, view sample interview questions, and learn about interviewing techniques.

*(More resources on next page)*

**Webinars:**

Website Link	Description of Resource
<b>Recruiting: Attracting Successful VISTAs Webinar</b>	Recorded webinar providing tips and resources on how to recruit the best candidates for your VISTA project.
<b>Elements of a Recruitment Plan</b>	Recorded webinar highlighting what you need to incorporate into a recruitment plan and what things you should consider when starting to think about how to attract applicants.
<b>Crafting a Compelling Service Opportunity Listing</b>	Recorded webinar giving specific ideas on how to make your service opportunity listings engaging and appealing to attract qualified applicants. <i>(This is a direct link to the YouTube recording.)</i>
<b>Leveraging Digital Marketing to Promote Your Opportunity Listings</b>	Recorded webinar focusing on advertising your service opportunity listings in a virtual environment.
<b>Realities of Rural Recruitment: Remedies and Resources</b>	Recorded webinar exploring ways that VISTA projects that consider themselves to be in rural environments can embrace the challenges of rural recruitment and work to turn challenges into opportunities.
<b>Purposefully Planning the Road to Recruitment</b>	Recorded webinar providing suggestions on how your VISTA project can intentionally put together a structure, design, and strategy for recruiting applicants. This webinar engages the viewer in making purposeful and meaningful moves during every step of the process to craft a plan that suits the needs of your VISTA project.
<b>Supervisor Q&amp;A: VISTA Member Recruitment</b>	Recorded webinar showcasing four areas of recruitment, each of which contains important information and resources as well as questions asked by the live viewers and answers provided by AmeriCorps staff.
<b>Using CareerOneStop to Provide Virtual Job Search Services to Help New College Graduates</b>	Upcoming live webinar with CareerOneStop on Thurs., Feb. 4, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. ET <i>(This is not a webinar conducted by AmeriCorps.)</i>  A significant number of our AmeriCorps members with the VISTA program are recent college graduates, and service with your organization helps them transition from college to the career world. In this webinar, staff from CareerOneStop will present how to use CareerOneStop to provide virtual services to help new college graduates job search. <i>(CareerOneStop and this webinar are resources external to, and not sponsored or endorsed by, AmeriCorps or the VISTA program.)</i>

*(More resources on next page)*

**Promotional Items and Gear:**

Website Link	Description of Resource
<a href="#">New AmeriCorps Brand Resources and Branding Guidance</a>	Details on AmeriCorps brand guidelines, gear store, and marketing materials.
<a href="#">AmeriCorps Promotional Items</a>	Website where you can order brochures and other promotional materials.
<a href="#">AmeriCorps Gear Webstore</a>	Website where you can order official national service gear.

*(More resources on next page)*

**Member and Sponsor Handbooks**

Website Link	Description of Resource
<a href="#">VISTA Member Handbook</a>	Comprehensive source for VISTA policies, procedures, definitions, and legal information for your records and to answer questions from applicants
<a href="#">Marketing, Outreach, and Recruitment</a>	Section of the VISTA Sponsor Handbook with ideas on how to spread the word within your communities and network, acknowledge VISTA and CNCS as a funder using logos and more, sharing the stories of your members, branding guidance, and other resources.
<a href="#">Distinctions between VISTA Members and Employees</a>	Section of the VISTA Sponsor Handbook detailing why VISTA members are different from employees, and why supervision should also be different.
<a href="#">VISTA Sponsor Handbook</a>	Policies, regulations, and information to support you in your role and to help you successfully sponsor a VISTA project.

Please note that you may need or want to adapt some of the above resources and tailor them for your VISTA project. Although there are general marketing and recruitment methods that can be used virtually and remotely, you want to customize and personalize them to your project and make it work for you.

*(Optional next steps for creating, adjusting, enhancing your marketing and recruitment on next page)*



**AmeriCorps**

## **Virtual AmeriCorps Member Marketing and Recruitment: Next Steps**

1. Create, review, and update your current recruitment plan and materials
  - a. Enhance your recruitment materials to show why your VISTA project is unique and worth someone exploring.
  - b. Consider creating different materials for different audiences to customize your strategy. You may need one type of advertising to recent college graduates, another type for seniors, a different style for promoting it at houses of worship, etc. Also determine which one (or more) type(s) of recruitment (e.g. electronic, printed, word-of-mouth, other) may work the best for each audience.
2. Ponder how you will market your positions and what will have the most positive results
  - a. Ask yourself and stakeholders why should someone want to apply to YOUR VISTA project?
  - b. Are there ways you can market it as a 'domestic adventure' that shows the reality of what it is like to live and serve there?
  - c. Use captivating adjectives, words, and images that accurately describe your great location. It can be difficult to recruit individuals you feel are best for your VISTA project, so find ways to adjust your marketing so that you are more likely to only get applicants who meet your qualifications and who also want to have a meaningful experience for a VISTA member.
3. Explore offering other potential benefits to your applicants and future members
  - a. Housing affordability, safety, and geographic proximity to the service site are major concerns, especially for any AmeriCorps member with the VISTA program who may relocate to serve with your project. Direct applicants to resources or specific housing units that may work for them. If you have the ability, offer a housing subsidy (it must go to the member's landlord on behalf of the member, and not directly to the member) to help offset the cost of housing.
  - b. Does your VISTA project have partnerships with local colleges and universities, fitness centers, or other business in the community such that you could offer your AmeriCorps member with the VISTA program free access to a college library or free fitness center membership? Be creative, but also make sure you are following the guidelines set forth in the VISTA Sponsor Handbook regarding supplemental benefits for AmeriCorps members with the VISTA program.
4. Engage and communicate with applicants and candidates between selection and start of service
  - a. Lack of communication can make or break someone's decision to serve, even after they have already accepted the offer. Depending on when you select an applicant to serve and when the AmeriCorps Regional Office advises is the next available VISTA Member Orientation, there will at least be a few weeks (if not a month or more) before they start service. Communicate with them every week (no less frequently than every two weeks) providing them materials and information to explore about your organization, telling them about the VISTA project, just saying hello and how excited you are for them to start serving, giving them the contact information of their direct supervisor and details they need to know for their first day of service, asking if they have any questions, and more.
  - b. Conduct at least one video or phone call to make a more personal connection with your candidates\*. Hearing their voice and seeing their face can energize you and make a significant positive impact (especially in a virtual environment) in the weeks leading up to and into the start of service. It shows the candidate that you care and want them there.
5. Share your ideas, questions, and resources in a discussion thread in the [Supervisor Café](#) discussion forums on the VISTA Campus
  - a. Utilize a resource created just for you! Supervisors want to get to know each other, share resources and suggestions, ask each other questions, and support each other in the work. You can do just that on the Supervisor Café discussion forums.
  - b. Supervisor Café: <https://www.vistacampus.gov/forums/supervisor-cafe-0>



6. Ask AmeriCorps members with the VISTA program and alumni to create a short and inspirational service video or story
  - a. If you have AmeriCorps alumni with the VISTA program, invite and encourage them to capture some short stories and moments in a video or written story.
  - b. Storytelling is powerful and can be very motivating for potential applicants to consider applying, and for actual applicants to become even more interested. Simply seeing an AmeriCorps member's face and hearing them talk about their service experience makes it more personal for the potential applicant and enables that individual to get a better feel for your VISTA project and VISTA positions.
  - c. Be creative in recruitment, because you can continue to do things the way your project has always done them while you can also take advantage of new methods and opportunities. Something like a short video could enhance your recruitment efforts as well as engage the community by getting to know the AmeriCorps member with the VISTA program and encouraging them to get involved as well.
7. Imagine yourself as an applicant. What would make you want to apply to this specific VISTA project?
  - a. If you read your marketing and recruitment materials, including your service opportunity listing, and are bored by it or even not really interested, most likely that is how others will feel. When you look at the information, what do you think? What thoughts and images and feelings first come to mind? Think about what potential applicants think.
  - b. It may be time to rejuvenate your materials and get others to provide feedback. You may have great ideas, but it is also important to recognize that everyone is different, and you can have multiple marketing and recruitment angles occurring simultaneously to attract different people. It is crucial for you to get feedback from other VISTA project staff, AmeriCorps members and leaders with the VISTA program, and direct supervisors, while also getting input from people in your organization who do not know anything about the VISTA program.
8. If you end up with a surplus of applicants (more applicants than positions),
  - a. Consider starting a waitlist. You may choose to interview a few extra applicants (even if you do not have positions for them at this time) and if you like them, ask them to be on your waitlist. Let them know that they do not yet have a position, but if one becomes available you will let them know. That can help you expedite filling a position if an applicant drops out after you select them.
  - b. Communicate to applicants when you know you have too many applicants for your positions and encourage them to apply to other nearby or related projects. You may know of nearby or related projects that you can mention or, if not, you can direct them to search again on [my.americorps.gov](http://my.americorps.gov). You are helping the applicant consider other options to serve, and you may be helping another VISTA project that could be struggling with recruitment.
9. Click on the links above to access and utilizes our resources and more.

*Notes on terminology:*

*\*An individual is an applicant once they complete an application and submit the application to at least one service opportunity listing. The individual moves from applicant to candidate after the AmeriCorps Regional Office reviews and approves the member application and once the individual is placed into a term of VISTA service. The individual moves from candidate to member after taking the federal oath of service (administered to them by a federal official), after correctly submitting their electronic oath form, and once the VISTA Member Support Unit activates them as a member in the Portal.*